State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Summary Information

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	John O'Conner (john.oconner@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	1
Funding Opportunity Title	RISE Local and Regional Planning Grant Program
CSFA Number	420-27-2777
CSFA Popular Name	RISE Local and Regional Planning Grant Program
Anticipated Number of Awards	0
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$3,500,000
Award Range	\$10000 - \$150000
Source of Funding	Federal
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	Yes
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	03/10/2022
Application Date Range	03/10/2022 - 05/09/2022 : 5:00pm
Grant Application Link	
Technical Assistance Session	Offered: Yes Mandatory: No Date: 03/17/2022: 10:00am Registration link: https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/onstage/g.php?MTID=e51b615f5e937 2764e6901073786e0810

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

RISE Local and Regional Planning Grant Program

NOFO ID: 2777-2106

A. Program Description

Public Act 102-0017 designated funds from the State Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency (CURE) Fund to the Research in Illinois to Spur Economic Recovery (RISE) program as described in 20 ILCS 605/605-418. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) will use \$3.5 million of those funds to initiate the RISE Local and Regional Planning Grant Program.

Funds from this program will be awarded to local governments, and regional economic development organizations to create or update regional plans to accelerate economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic (referred to herein as the "Economic Recovery Plan"). Plans created under this program must align with the goals laid out in the state's 2019 "Plan to Revitalize the Illinois Economy¹" and outline specific initiatives or investments that would support robust and equitable economic growth during the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Priority will be given to plans that address an economically distressed community or region, in keeping with sections D.2 and E.1.

Updating or creating local and regional Economic Recovery Plans is a path to recovery from the COVID-19 health and economic crisis. Such plans may vary in scale and scope. Plans may be narrowly targeted to sectors or communities that have been particularly hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples could include plans to promote recovery by a local business district that has been particularly hard-hit by the pandemic or a plan to promote recovery for the leisure & hospitality sector across a broader region. In addition, the Department recognizes that recovery from the COVID-19 crisis will occur in the context of local and regional economic and demographic trends, infrastructure extent and condition, industry clusters, and other conditions that will play an important role in recovery from the pandemic; therefore, the Department will also consider applications to develop or revise more comprehensive local and regional plans. However, in order to be eligible for funding, such proposals should be designed to promote economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and must be directly responsive to economic distress arising from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plans should address critical local or regional needs and recovery strategies tailored to the strengths and vulnerabilities of the community and/or region. Priority issues to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, job losses and business closures, adapting to shifting economic trends, housing needs and homelessness, critical economic and public health infrastructure, and ensuring access to quality educational opportunities and healthcare. Each plan shall include specific initiatives or capital investments that accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and that are eligible for funding from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program (SLFRF), according to Treasury guidance.²

A successful applicant will demonstrate the capacity to collect relevant data regarding local and regional economic and social conditions, assess the impacts of COVID-19 on current economic conditions and growth prospects, conduct outreach with local and regional stakeholders, and develop an Economic Recovery Plan that will provide useful guidance to local and regional policy-makers as they seek to accelerate recovery from COVID-19.

¹ https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/Pages/EconPlan2019.aspx

² To see information about allowable uses of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program, a part of the American Rescue plan, see information from the U.S. Treasury here: https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds.

Successful applicants will receive funding for projects on a reimbursement basis, upon successful completion of milestones in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. Such milestones shall include, but are not limited to, the following categories of milestones: summaries of economic and demographic research, meetings conducted with local and regional stakeholders, and completing/disseminating drafts of recovery plans.

B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery ("CSFR") funds (CFDA 21.027) as made available by the American Rescue Plan Act ("ARPA") and appropriated by Public Act 102-0017. The total amount of grant funds anticipated for this award is \$3.5 million. Grant funds will be dispersed as project deliverables are completed, according to terms established in grant agreements. Individual awards will vary according to the proposed coverage areas, as indicated:

- \$10,000-\$75,000 for coverage areas with populations of up to 75,000 residents;
- \$10,000-\$150,000 for coverage areas with populations of more than 75,000 residents.

DCEO anticipates establishing grant agreements with successful applicants in the Spring of 2022. Grant agreements will generally cover a one-year period, but may be extended if necessary. All funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need as defined in Section E.1.

Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- 1. Has a valid FEIN number;
- 2. Has a valid DUNS number;
- 3. Has a current SAM.gov registration;
- 4. Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List;
- 5. Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable;
- 6. Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list; and
- 7. Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list.

Marking SAM.gov registrations as "public" will allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information. Making the SAM.gov registration "private" will not prevent the review; however, it will slow down the review process.

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of "qualified" status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., inactive DUNS, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

- 1. Counties;
- 2. Municipalities (villages, cities, townships);
- 3. Other local units of government;
- 4. Economic development organizations (EDOs)³;

Applicants must include letters of support from local governments included in the planning area to be eligible to apply. For a county or multi-county coverage area, these letters of support must come from all counties included in whole or in part. For a sub-county region, letters must be provided by the relevant municipality or municipalities. If unincorporated areas within the county are included within a sub-county planning area, a letter of support from the county must be included. This requirement does not apply to county or municipality applicants proposing a coverage area entirely within their own borders.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

This grant opportunity does not require a match.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

³ Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) are entities dedicated to the economic development of a region within the state. EDOs are typically government agencies, public-private partnerships, or non-governmental organizations who collaborate with public and private stakeholders within a defined sub-state area. For purposes of this program, EDOs can also include organizations providing planning and technical assistance to counties and communities intended to guide and facilitate development of necessary transportation and other infrastructure needed to sustain economic growth and opportunity.

- b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established in indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year, depending on the grantee's audit type requirements.
- c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect to waive payments for indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to "Waive Indirect Costs" into the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system.

State Universities may request an indirect cost rate of 10% due to the State of Illinois' continuous funding of a portion of facility and administrative costs.

4. Other, if applicable.

Applicants may only submit (1) one application for this program.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the "Grant Application Link" field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

John O'Conner Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity 500 E. Monroe St. Springfield, IL 62701

Email: CEO.RISEPlanning@illinois.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- a) Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format (print, sign and scan signature page with submission)
- b) Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials (print, sign and scan signature page with submission)
- c) Conflict of Interest Disclosure

d) Mandatory Disclosure

This Notice also requires the following program specific requirements be submitted:

3. Project Narrative

Each applicant must submit a project narrative containing the elements described below (there is no limit on the number of pages and no specific formatting requirements):

- a) A defined coverage area for this economic development plan;
- An assessment of the status, scope, and usefulness of existing local and regional plans (current or expired);
- c) An assessment of the applicant's current financial and staffing resources available for economic development planning activities;
- d) Documentation of the applicant team's experience and expertise relevant to managing comparable state grants and successfully developing local and regional plans;
- e) If available at the time of application, a list of any consultants or contractors who may assist with development or execution of the economic plan, including copies of any contracts:
- f) A summary of the detailed budget provided through the Uniform Budget template, documenting the resources needed to create and publish the Economic Recovery Plan. Potential budget items include:
 - Staffing costs;
 - Consulting fees;
 - o Proprietary data or software;
 - Meeting expenses;
 - Printing fees;
 - Other
- g) A timeline of all activities needed to create an Economic Recovery Plan;
- h) An assessment of economic distress or inequality in the proposed plan's coverage area;
- i) An assessment of the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on economic and social conditions in the proposed plan's coverage area;
- j) A plan to collect relevant data or information on issues impacting the current state of the local or regional economy. Depending on the scale and scope of the proposed plan, this might include elements such as the following. For any element included, please identify the implications of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis:
 - 1. Population data and trends;
 - 2. Economic structure and vitality;
 - 3. Job and unemployment data and trends;
 - 4. Prominent industry clusters;
 - 5. Economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
 - 6. Extent and condition of public infrastructure;
 - 7. Education and training resources;
 - 8. Land use and sustainable housing plans;
 - 9. Groundwater and stormwater management;
 - 10. Social, recreational, arts and cultural development;
- k) Documentation of the public outreach strategy and a list of stakeholders that will contribute to the Economic Recovery Plan. Examples of potential stakeholders include:
 - Elected officials;
 - Economic development organizations;
 - Members of the business community;
 - o Labor unions or other individuals/organizations representing workers;
 - o Residents;
 - Non-profit agencies and community organization;
 - o Local or regional workforce training organizations;

- I) A list of specific economic issues the Economic Recovery Plan will cover. Depending on the scale and scope of the proposed plan, this might include elements such as the following. For any element included, please identify the implications of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis:
 - Employment and jobs;
 - Population and demographic trends;
 - Condition and adequacy of physical infrastructure (transportation, water& sewer, broadband, etc.);
 - Education and workforce training;
 - o Housing;
 - o Quality of life;
 - Air and water quality;
 - Climate change risks;
- m) Strategy for identifying specific investments and initiatives that will support economic recovery from the pandemic in the locality or region, including investments and initiatives that are eligible for SLFRF funds;
- n) Letters of support from stakeholders and the public. This shall include documentation of support from affected counties and/or municipalities as required by Section C.1;
- o) Commitment to review and update the plan periodically.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- a) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab. Please note, making SAM.gov registrations "public" will expedite the GATA Grantee Portal pre-qualification process.
- b) Provide a valid DUNS number in its application, which matches the DUNS number used in both the applicant entity's SAM registration and GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- c) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

5. Submission Dates and Times.

An application package containing all required documents shall be submitted electronically no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 9, 2022.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2177ee5263bf440eacba4c25da6000ad. The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements.

Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

6. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

7. Funding Restrictions.

This grant opportunity does not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

8. Other Submission Requirements.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2177ee5263bf440eacba4c25da6000ad.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

Electronic submissions including links to documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be scored on a 100-point scale. The Department shall consider the following criteria when evaluating the application submittal: Capacity, Quality and Need.

(45 points) Need – Up to 45 points will be awarded to an applicant that can demonstrate the need to create or update a local or regional economic development plan. Points will be awarded to:

- Applicants that do not have an economic development plan appropriate for current circumstances or have a plan that will expire before January 1, 2024.
- Applicants that can demonstrate that they have inadequate resources to conduct an economic development plan without outside assistance.
- Applicants that demonstrate economic distress and inequality using economic metrics for the community or region covered by the plan. Examples of potential metrics include unemployment rates, household income, poverty rates relative to state and national averages. concentration of Qualified Census Tracts⁴, Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs) as defined by the Back to Business Grant program⁵, and Opportunity Zones⁶.
- Applicants for whom the local/regional economy has been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 health and economic crisis due to the nature of local industry (e.g. reliance on tourism) and/or high spread of COVID-19.

(25 points) Capacity – Up to 25 points will be awarded to an applicant which demonstrates the ability to successfully compose a local or regional Economic Recovery Plan. Points will be awarded to:

⁴ See U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development web site at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/qct.html

⁵ See DCEO web site at https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/B2B.aspx

⁶ See DCEO web site at https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/Pages/OppZn.aspx

- Applicants that have staff experience successfully managing state or federal grants of this nature.
- Applicants that have sufficient economic development professionals on staff and/or contractors that can support in data collection, analytical, and administrative tasks to successfully complete the economic development plan.
- Applicants that have demonstrated an understanding of the components needed for an
 effective economic development plan consistent with the scope of work.
- Applicants that have a realistic and detailed timeline for all activities needed to create the economic development plan within 9 months of establishing a grant agreement.

(30 points) Quality – Up to 30 points will awarded to an applicant that addresses the relevant economic development needs in the proposed area, and describes how this plan will facilitate the economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. Points will be awarded for:

- An application package is complete and contains information for the reviewer to understand the scope of the economic development plan project.
- A budget that contains adequate detail to determine how funds will be used to develop the updated or new economic development plan and is reasonable.
- Applicants that have identified a representative working group of local/regional stakeholders that collectively offer the expertise to comprehensively assess economic development needs and identify viable strategies to improve economic development prospects. Additional points will be awarded if applicant documents commitment from identified stakeholders to participate in planning efforts.
- Description of how COVID-19 has impacted economic and social conditions in the planning area.
- With respect to priority issues specified in scope of work, applicant identifies clear and viable:
 - data sources and data collection methods that will be used to provide demographic and economic baselines for economic development plan development;
 - strategies for developing a plan to foster economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - approaches for documenting and assessing the economic, infrastructure, and cultural resources of the project study area;
 - approaches for evaluating and improving economic resilience for the community or region;
 - approaches for identifying and coordinating planning efforts, as appropriate, with relevant local/regional planning activities;
 - Identifying an effective approach for evaluating and improving economic opportunity for disadvantaged populations and communities.

2. Review and Selection Process.

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Each applicant will then be ranked by their score.

The Department may choose to depart from merit review rankings when making awards as needed to reflect balance and diversity across several dimensions, including:

- Geographic dispersion of coverage areas across the state;
- Mix of urban vs. rural coverage areas;
- · Adequate representation of underserved areas;

Mix between local and regional plans.

The Department may also decline to make awards for proposals in conflict with or duplicative of higher-scoring proposals that include overlapping coverage areas, or reduce the amount of an award as necessary to reflect the scope of work included in the proposal.

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:

https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/AboutDCEO/GrantOpportunities/Pages/MeritAppReview.aspx.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

The Department anticipates issuing Notices of State Awards (NOSA) 8 weeks after the close of the application period. The Department reserves the right to issue reduced awards, or not to issue any awards.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a denial letter once all NOSAs have been accepted by successful applicants.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

COVID-19 Requirements: Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, to be eligible to receive an award, grant applicants are required to adhere to all applicable executive orders issued by the Governor of Illinois, rules issued by an Illinois state agency, or other directives and/or guidance issued by Illinois state agencies related to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. These same requirements will apply to grantees in carrying out the activities in the award throughout the award term.

Grant Uniform Requirements: The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 III. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Procurement: Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327). This may apply to consulting services acquired to complete elements of the scope of work.

3. Reporting.

Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

Monitoring

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

Audit

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act shall apply (See 30 ILCS 708/65(c)).

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

John O'Conner

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

Email: CEO.RISEPlanning@illinois.gov

H. Other Information, if applicable

This is a one-time initiative as defined within the annual appropriation bill (Public Act 102-0017) set forth by the Illinois General Assembly. This notice does not obligate the State of Illinois to make any State awards.